

### La Jeune Femme chez l'Épicière.

La première année de notre mariage, ma femme décida de faire son marché elle-même. "Non seulement cela me plaît, dit-elle, mais je crois pouvoir y réaliser des économies." L'épicière, notre voisine, eut sa première visite. "Ce que je veux, dit-elle, c'est faire le plus d'économies possible. Je suis décidée de faire moi-même mon pain et de ne pas acheter de pâtisseries." Dans un petit panier, elle vit des œufs. "Combien la douzaine, demanda-t-elle à l'épicière?" "Comme vous le savez, les œufs sont très chers, mais ma femme fut surprise du prix, 25cts. "Vingt-cinq cents! Mais ce prix est tout simplement impossible. Je vous ai dit que je voulais faire les économies, n'auriez-vous pas des œufs à 18 cts. ou à 20c? Ce prix est d'ailleurs très élevé." Notre épicière, ainsi domptée, demanda à la jeune femme des explications que la situation demandait. "J'ai des œufs à 20 cts la douzaine, mais je ne puis vous les recommander. S'il s'agit pour vous de faire de bonnes pâtisseries, il ne vous faut pas songer à faire des économies sous ce rapport. Le beurre, les œufs et la farine sont des articles qu'il vous faut de toute nécessité avoir de première qualité." Ainsi parla l'épicière, en homme sage qu'il était. Ma femme reprit: "Mais, alors, sur quoi pourrais-je faire des économies?" "Sur une foule de choses, mais jamais sur ce qui est absolument nécessaire, dit l'épicière, la farine de première qualité, les œufs frais et le bon beurre sont indispensables." "Quelle est votre meilleure farine, questionna la nouvelle ménagère?" "La farine 'Royal Household,' dit simplement l'épicière. "Quel en est le prix?" "Il lui dit. "Mais vous devez en avoir de meilleur marché?" "J'en ai qui coûte moins cher, mais ce n'est pas meilleur marché pour cela. À la longue, elle coûte plus cher." "Pour quelle raison?"

"En achetant la farine 'Royal Household,' vous en avez beaucoup plus pour votre argent, vous avez une plus grande valeur pour un prix à peine supérieur. En un mot, vous avez tout la valeur de la farine." "Qu'entendez-vous par—valeur de la farine?" "La plus grande quantité des éléments nutritifs que contient le blé." C'était le moment de l'après-midi où les affaires sont un peu plus calmes, aussi l'épicière se mit-elle à expliquer à ma femme ce qu'il savait de la farine. "Plus la farine est bon marché, plus elle contient de son." "Il y a du son dans toute les farines tant qu'on ne l'a pas ôté." "Le son est éliminé de la farine 'Royal Household,' ce qui exige une mouture parfaite, des machines perfectionnées et un outillage parfait sous tous les rapports." "Outre ce que je viens de vous énumérer, la farine en question est purifiée par l'électricité et ceci la rend différente de toutes les autres farines." "Tous mes clients me la demandent, ce qui confirme la bonne opinion que j'ai d'elle." A ce passage, un soupçon traversa l'esprit de ma femme et ce fut d'un ton un peu moqueur qu'elle demanda. "Ne faites-vous pas de plus gros bénéfices en vendant la farine 'Royal Household'?" "Non, certainement non, madame, répondit notre épicière,—au contraire j'en fais moins que sur les farines de seconde qualité." "Alors, pourquoi la recommandez-vous aussi chaudement?" "Simplement par le fait qu'un client qui achète de la farine 'Royal Household' sait ensuite ce qu'il veut quand il a besoin de farine, je n'ai plus besoin de lui faire l'article." "Si vous le demandez à la Compagnie des Moulins à Farines Ogilvie, vous recevrez un petit livre utile sur la manière de faire le pain." Ce dernier argument décida ma femme qui acheta de la farine "Royal Household," des œufs de 25 cts. et le meilleur beurre qu'elle put trouver.

SANS-SOUCI. 121



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